

societies who have engaged in China in exchanging our ideas of the greatest of all truths which concern the immortal destinies of man.

"In the name of my august master, the Emperor of China, I beg to tender to you his best thanks for your approval and appreciation of the protection afforded to the American missionaries in China. What we have done is but the duty of our government; while the missionaries, as you have so ably expressed, have not sought for pecuniary gains at the hands of our people. They have not been secret emissaries of diplomatic schemes. Their labors have no political significance; and, last, not least, if I might be permitted to add, they have not interfered with, or usurped the rights of, the territorial authorities.

"As a man is composed of soul, intellect and body, I highly appreciate that your eminent boards, in your arduous and much-esteemed work in the field of China, have neglected none of the three. As for intellect, you have started numerous educational establishments which have served as the best means to enable our countrymen to acquire a fair knowledge of the modern arts and sciences of the West. As for the material part of our constitution, your societies have started hospitals and dispensaries to save not only the soul, but also the body, of our countrymen. I have also to add that in the time of famine in some of the provinces you have done your best to the greatest number of the sufferers to keep their bodies and souls together. Before I bring my reply to a conclusion, I have only two things to mention:

"The first, the opium smoking, being a great curse to the Chinese population, your societies have tried their best, not only as anti-opium societies, but to afford the best means to stop the craving for the opium; and also you receive none as your converts who are opium smokers.

"I have to tender, in my own name, my best thanks for your most effective prayers to God to spare my life when it was imperiled by the assassin's bullet, and for your most kind wishes which you have just now so ably expressed in the interest of my sovereign, my country and my people."

• WORLDLY CONFORMITY.

We, the pastor, the elders and deacons of the First Presbyterian Church of Bristol, Tenn., to whom is committed the duty of taking the oversight of the members of this church, are moved to call the attention of our people to certain influences, which we deem hurtful to the spirituality of God's children, and detrimental to the cause of Christ among non-professors; who in large and necessary measure test Christianity by the lives of those who profess its principles.

First—The Habit of Card Playing.

This we believe ought to be discouraged by professing Christians for the following reasons:

1. The church, time and again through her courts, composed of intelligent and consecrated ministers and elders, has declared against card playing. Loyalty to an organization, voluntarily entered, is justly obligatory.

2. The associations of cards. Cards are used largely by professional gamblers, and it seems incongruous to find the deck of cards in the Christian home, and also in the gambler's apartments.

A Presbyterian minister of national reputation, in a book written by himself, urges this as a strong consideration against participation in this game by followers of Christ. Doubtless, the fascinations of the social game have in many instances, encouraged participants, to give expression to their skill where the main purpose is to acquire gain. We can not know the person who may be thus encouraged, and even the possibility of, in any measure, influencing one individual to adopt the deplorable occupation of gambling is sufficient to cause serious thought.

3. As to prize features in these contests, it may be that some of the players, or all of them, are not prompted by any sinister motive. They may regard the prize as merely a compliment to the skilful contestant—nevertheless, it is probably true, that the prizes offered have much to do with the intense fascination and excessive prevalence of this indulgence. Not long since, an honored and eminent southern judge had some strong words to say on this subject in his charge to the grand jury. What he said was earnestly endorsed by one of the best and purest men the South has ever had in public office.

The judge said: "That to play cards for valuable prizes, purchased with funds to which the players have contributed is a violation of the law against gambling." He also said, "It is not less criminal to play for a silver card-case, than for a plain silver dollar as it comes from the mint."

All around us there are those whose moral sense is not so keen, whose liability to sinful excess is enhanced by even the apparent conformation of those, whose advantages are superior, whose professions are greater, and whose responsibilities are augmented.

4. The valuable time squandered in this practice by those whose efforts are needed for their own spiritual culture, and for their persistent service along nobler lines, is a consideration that the thoughtful cannot afford to disregard. We are fully persuaded that women are too good to give themselves to this indulgence.

"We believe woman is the finest of all God's earthly workmanship: we are reluctant to put the angels much above her at best. Cherishing such views about woman, we feel perfectly sure that God made her for some higher, nobler purpose."

5. If it is right and expedient for church members to play cards, why is it not right and expedient for ministers to do so? They serve the same Lord: they have virtually assumed the same vows: they are all sinners by nature and only saints by grace.

The standard that church members exact of their Pastor is the standard that God exacts of them. "One is your Master." If the Pastor of this church were to give a card party in his home, we feel sure that the regret and surprise of professing Christians, and from non-professors would be sincere and profound. His members and others would scarcely take pleasure in a continuance of his pulpit ministrations.

In this connection we would express our Christian